

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed February 7, 2007 ("Office Action").

Claim Amendments

Consistent with paragraph 0039 of the specification, new claims 22 and 23, depending from claims 9 and 16 respectively, have been added. No new matter is introduced by the addition of these two claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 9, 11-12, 16, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Nakagawa et al. (US 6,024,774)("Nakagawa").

Nakagawa is relied on by the Office as teaching an apparatus for selectively reducing carbon monoxide content of a hydrogen rich gas, comprising: a catalyst bed containing an oxidation catalyst; a porous tube positioned substantially within a catalyst bed for distributing raw material gas throughout the catalyst bed; and a cooling jacket for maintaining the reactor temperature; and the porous tube is an alumina tube. Office Action, pp. 2-3.

In addition to the arguments previously presented and hereby incorporated by reference, for claims 9, 11-12, 16, and 18 to be anticipated by Nakagawa under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), each and every element as set forth in the claim must be expressly or inherently described in Nakagawa. See M.P.E.P. §2131. Nakagawa does not disclose "an oxidation reactor having a catalyst bed" as recited in claims 9, 11-12, 16, and 18. Nakagawa contains no reference to an oxidation reactor.

In conclusion, for the reasons set forth above, claims 9, 11-12, 16, and 18 are not anticipated by Nakagawa. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection – 35 USC § 102

Claims 9, 12, 15, 16, and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Clawson (US 6,641,625) ("Clawson").

Clawson is relied on by the Office as teaching an apparatus for selectively reducing carbon monoxide content of a hydrogen rich gas, comprising: a catalyst bed containing an oxidation catalyst; a porous tube positioned substantially within a catalyst bed for distributing raw material gas throughout the catalyst bed; and a cooling jacket for maintaining the reactor temperature; and the porous tube is an alumina tube. Office Action, p. 3.

In addition to the arguments previously presented and hereby incorporated by reference, for claims 9, 12, 15, 16, and 21 to be anticipated by Clawson under 35 U.S.C. §102(e), each and every element as set forth in the claim must be expressly or inherently described in Clawson. See M.P.E.P. §2131. Clawson does not disclose "a porous tube . . . for distributing an oxygen-containing stream throughout the catalyst bed" as recited in claims 9, 12, 15, 16, and 21. Assuming for the sake of argument that the "first cylindrical wall (92)" of Clawson is the "porous tube" of the present invention, reformat (instead of an oxygen-containing stream) passes through the first cylindrical wall 92. Compare column 14, lines 30-59 of Clawson and Figure 2, paragraph 0037, and claims 9 and 16 of the present invention.

In conclusion, for the reasons set forth above, claims 9, 12, 15, 16, and 21 are not anticipated by Clawson. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection – 35 USC § 103

Claims 10, 13-15, 17, and 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakagawa et al. (US 6,024,774) ("Nakagawa"). Dependent claims 10, 13-15, 17, and 19-21 are believed to be in condition for allowance by

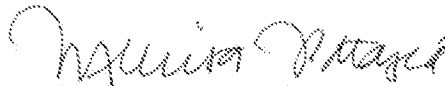
virtue of their dependence from independent claims 9 and 16. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

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Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the obviousness rejection. This is believed to be a full and complete response to the outstanding Office Action mailed February 7, 2007. The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of the captioned application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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August 6, 2007

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